



EXHIBIT A

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In Re Application of: Confirmation No.: 7243
Gordon Mark Saker Group Art Unit: 3762
Serial No.: 09/981,585 Examiner: Deak, Leslie R.
Filed: October 17, 2001 Docket No. 351901-1010
For: **Universal Connector and Method for Securing Flexible Tube Assemblies**

AMENDMENT AND RESPONSE

Mail Stop Amendment
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

RECEIVED
MAY 10 2004
TECHNOLOGY CENTER R3700

Sir:

The non-final Office Action, mailed February 12, 2004, has been carefully considered. In response, please enter the following amendments and consider the following remarks.

Amendments to the Specification begin on page 3 of this paper.

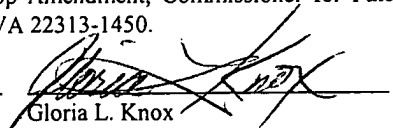
Amendments to the Claims are reflected in the list beginning on page 6 of this paper.

Remarks begin on page 10 of this paper.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail for delivery with proper postage thereon to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Date: 5/3/2004


Gloria L. Knox

AUTHORIZATION TO DEBIT DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those, which may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a), and any fees required therefor (including fees for net addition of claims) are hereby authorized to be charged to Thomas, Kayden, Horstemeyer & Risley LLP's Deposit Account No. 20-0778.